

nflcp

Newsletter

National Federation of Local Cable Programmers

\$2.50

Communications Subcommittee Holds Cable Hearings

Agreed: Access Here to Stay

The future of public access to cable TV may well be determined by legislation currently being drafted by the House Subcommittee on Communications, which is rewriting the Communications Act of 1934.

The subcommittee, chaired by Rep. Lionel Van Deerlin (D-Calif.), has been holding hearings and taking testimony from people involved in all aspects of cable operation, from cable operators and broadcast industry representatives to access users and advocates of strong locally originated programming. On September 30, representatives of the NFLCP gave testimony favoring cable access at House Communications Subcommittee sponsored hearings in Washington, D.C.

A wide range of groups concerned with cable were represented, including the National Cable Television Association (NCTA) and the Cable Television Information Center (CTIC) of Washington, D.C.

Most participants at the hearings agreed that provision should be made for access, although there was disagreement on the specifics of how access will be mandated and what the parameters of responsibility should be.

David Hoke spoke for the NFLCP and responded to claims by some industry representatives that communities were not responding to access opportunities. He pointed out that substantial numbers of citizens are using access and the number is growing. He

charged that access users have experienced varying degrees of cooperation from cable operators. Although some operators have been more than cooperative, taking the initiative to foster community use of cable, most would not provide access without a mandate to do so, and users have often been unable to get operators to honor existing requirements. One operator who favors the principle of local access, Earl Haydt, testified on September 29 along with Red Burns of the Alternate Media Center, that community use of cable benefitted both the community and the cable operator.

Testimony at the hearing was given informally in panel discussion groups

(continued on page 15)

Inside:

NFLCP Plans 1978
National Conference

Citizens Air Grips at NAB
Meeting

Programmer Reveals
Success Formula

Access Profile: Vineland,
New Jersey

Plus Legal Briefs, Regional
Reports, Federation
Trunkline, Info Matchup,
Calendar, and more...



Pittsburgh Community Video shows children how to have fun discovering themselves through video "feedback games" while in the portable inflatable "Video Environment."

Letter from the Editors

Dear Reader,

We are happy to announce that support for the NFLCP has grown and we have received a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts to host a national conference of community television programmers. Access producers, video and film artists, and those involved in local programming nationwide are invited to participate. For more details, turn to page 3.

In this issue, the NFLCP testimony before the House Subcommittee on Communications (see cover story) is featured. For innovative programming ideas, take a look at *Flip the Dial to Access*, by Gary Knowles on page 4. And for an update on regulatory matters, see *Legal Briefs*, page 6, which discusses a petition for permanent access funding, and the saturated systems' squeeze on access.

We extend a sincere "thank you" to the people who helped to print, collate, and distribute our last issue, including: Phil Bailey, Joan Bernstein, Jimmy Callen, Bill Crawford, Baron Hiltz, Jim Jones, Robert Matorin, *Media Works* (Carol Greenwald, Howard Horton, and Peter Miller), Charles Tesch, Jim Westgate, William Westgate, and the Somerville Multi-Service Center.

In case you've forgotten . . . the *NFLCP Newsletter* is now sent only to members and subscribers. Please pass the word on to other interested readers that subscription is the only way to receive the *NFLCP Newsletter*.

See you in the next *Newsletter*,
The Editors

Deadline February 15. P.O. Box 119, Cambridge, MA 02142

EDITORIAL POLICY

The Editorial Collective established the following editorial policy which was accepted by the Steering Committee at its December, 1977 meeting:

The *NFLCP Newsletter* reserves the right to cut articles due to lack of space. It will publish articles that 1) are of general interest to cable programmers and media access advocates and 2) are of specific interest to NFLCP membership.

The criteria upon which articles are judged to be included in the *NFLCP Newsletter* are clarity, accuracy, fairness to subject, timeliness, newsworthiness, overall organization, and degree to which the article is thorough and complete.

The *NFLCP Newsletter* is a bimonthly publication of the National Federation of Local Cable Programmers; NFLCP national address: 763½ Chestnut St., Dubuque, IA 52001. NFLCP newsletter editorial address: P.O. Box 119, Cambridge, MA 02142. Newsletter subscriptions: Mickey Brandt, Treasurer, Cable Channel 7, 76 South Spring Rd., Vineland, NJ 08360.

Subscriptions come with membership: individual \$15/year, organization \$50/year, sponsor \$100 minimum/year; or can be obtained separately for \$7.50/year individuals or \$15/year for organizations.

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Special thanks to: Susan Siens (typesetting), Urban Planning Aid, Diane Bahl, MIT Film Section, Kelsey Thompson, Tufts University Computer Center

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

ARTICLES

Subcommittee Hearings	1
NFLCP Plans National Conference	3
Programming: Flip the Dial to Access	4
Citizens Air Gripes at NAB Meeting	7

FEATURES

Letter from the Editors	2
Access Profile: Vineland	5
Legal Briefs	6
Regional Reports	8
Info Match-Up	16
Calendar	17
Community Education	10

NFLCP Plans National Conference

Plans are now in the works for the first annual NFLCP National Convention to be held in Madison, Wisconsin on July 6-9, announced Sue Buske, NFLCP steering committee coordinator.

Workshops, seminars, panel discussions, and a video and super 8 film festival, will highlight the four-day event.

Gary Knowles, former editor of *Vidicon Journal*, Alternate Media Center Intern and producer of "Live on Six" and other programs in Madison, Wisconsin (see article on page 4) was named NFLCP Conference Coordinator. More from Knowles in the next *Newsletter*.

The main goal of the convention is to provide services to those working in the field, Buske said.

"There are many people around the country facing the frustrations and successes of community television every day," she said. "It is our hope that these people can attend the conference and not only take home valuable skills and information, but become stronger in the knowledge that there are many others just like them who can offer support."

The convention is being run with the assistance of a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts through its Services to the Field Program of the Media Arts Panel. According to Buske, the conference grant will help the NFLCP provide many services to film and video makers which they have been unable to receive in the past.

Workshops will cover such topics as the FCC and Cable Access; How to Get Your Films and Tapes on Public Television; Libraries and Cable; Community Video and Satellites; Women and Media; Grant Writing; Using Video as an Organizing Tool; The Cable Franchising Process; What's Happening with the Communications Act Rewrite; The Media Reform Movement; Distribution Systems for Independent Film and Video Makers; Churches and Cable; Publicity; Equipment Modification; and a wide variety

of other informational areas.

Skilled and experienced professionals from around the country who are involved in community programming will lead the workshops, according to Buske.

"There are many talented people out

**"We're Here to Stay!"
says NFLCP.**

there with a lot to share. We intend to make use of their skills and knowledge, and in so doing, demonstrate the importance and viability of the access movement," she said.

"We're here to stay!"

Keynote speakers will include a number of nationally known professionals active in the access movement who have been instrumental in building community television in this country, said Buske.

The Video and Super 8 Film Festival, one of the convention's highlights, will serve as the basis for a traveling film and video show, according to Larry Staab, festival coordinator. Staab plans to make the traveling festival available to local programmers, cable operators, schools, and others throughout the country. (See story on page 3.) The festival will enable people to view each other's productions and get a sense of the kind of work being done by local programmers everywhere, Staab said.

NFLCP business will be taken care of via delegate meetings. Each region is now in the process of electing delegates. Buske asked that anyone interested in serving as a delegate contact his or her regional coordinator. She also noted that members of the NFLCP's various task forces are hard at work preparing for the convention. Reports and position papers to be presented to the delegates are now in the works, she said.

Informational packets publicizing the convention will be mailed to local

programmers and others throughout the country in the near future. Registration for the conference will be \$25.00 for NFLCP members and \$40.00 for non-members. This does not include the price of board and room, Buske said, but the NFLCP plans to keep the cost for participation as low as possible so the greatest number of people can attend.

Anyone interested in obtaining information about the conference, leading workshops, or any other form of participation, should contact Sue Buske, 763½ Chestnut Street, Dubuque, IA 52001. ■

NFLCP Invites Entries for National Video and Film Festival

A video and super 8 film festival designed to promote and explore the concept of community television is one of the special features planned for the NFLCP's first annual conference.

The festival will aim to give independent and community access producers an opportunity to present their work nationally, according to Larry Staab, festival coordinator.

"This is not a traditional festival, but an event of learning and celebration," he said. "We are looking for a broad interpretation of the theme 'Hometown USA.'"

The festival committee will select outstanding representative videotapes and films (both portapak and studio productions) from the following categories: children, women, the arts, the third world, education, senior citizens, special audience, sports, religion, and public opinion/community issues.

The panel of judges will be made up of people with a variety of interests in video and film. The selected entries will

(continued on page 17)

Flip the Dial to Access

by Gary Knowles

Public access today faces many of the same problems that confronted public television in its early days—audience building, funding and just plain survival. Like public television, access will not gain sure footing until it has survived a generation of television watchers. When today's toddlers have seen enough television to realize they can flip the dial to access as well as Sesame Street and the Saturday morning cartoons, then those of us who care about access will breathe a little easier. Until then...

Enthusiasm for access programming can be generated in any number of ways. If you want to be cynical about it you can heed H.L. Mencken's observation that no one has ever gone broke underestimating the taste of the American public. But it seems that those who choose such a course will never get where access wants to go, and anyway, that path is filled with broadcasters. The way of access and the way I suspect a lot of you are headed is to get people excited about getting involved in producing and participating in programs they feel are important. The key is to get the message to people that it's possible to say whatever they want to and do whatever they want to do on

public access.

One of the best ways I've found to get people informed about the availability of access is to put them on it, *with consent*. Usually folks will ask you when they're going to be on and where, but if they don't, you've got to remember to tell them. It's at least as important as taping them. Now, how do you put them on?

Program Possibilities

EAT THE EVIDENCE This is an old idea that keeps surfacing from time to time. Why not do a cooking program using your friends in the neighborhood to start things off. They cook and you shoot, or if you have a production

.....
"The key is to get the message out—people can say and do whatever they want on public access."
.....

team, you also add a commentator. Mimeo the recipes and send them out to viewers who request them. New cooks can also be solicited on the program. Perhaps you can get a local grocer or two to underwrite costs of production and do PBS-style sponsorship.

ON HIZZONER Get your favorite mayor to do a regular, live report to the people. Do call-ins. If you can't go

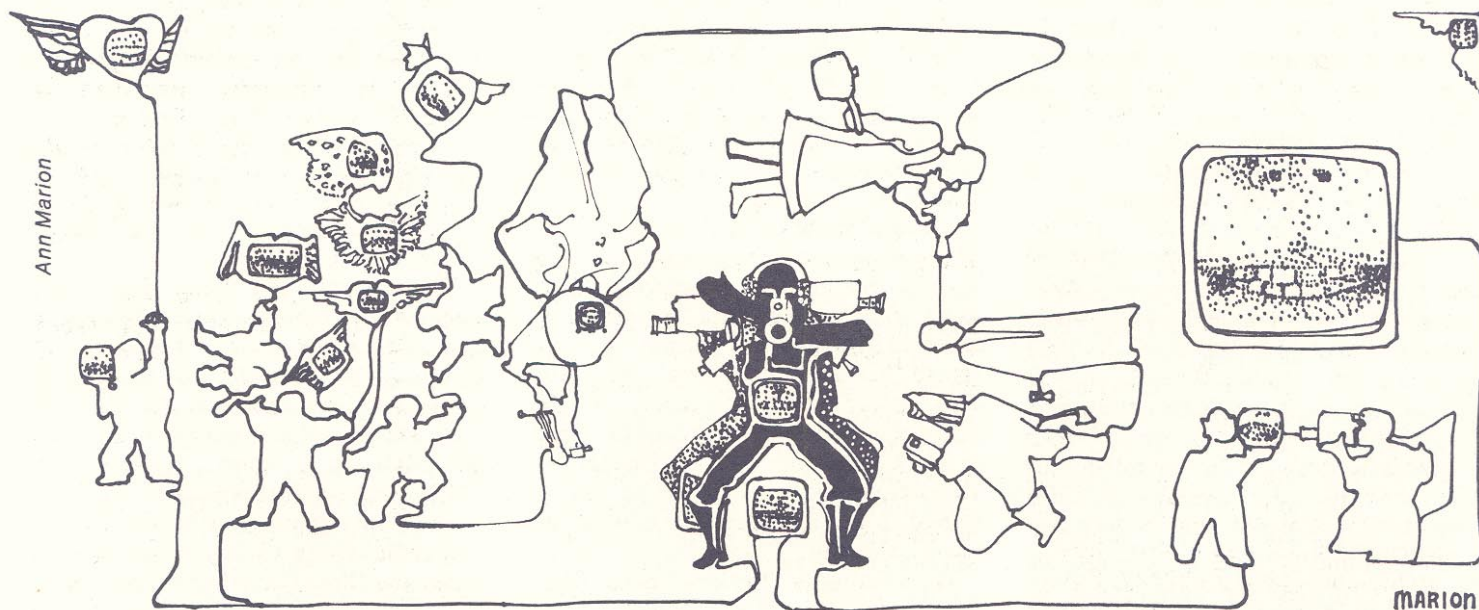
live, go out on the street, tape citizens' questions, play back for the mayor, tape his response, then play both for everyone. Have an address where people can send in questions. This type of show suffers from a Carl Sandburg-type breakfast problem: We could have some eggs and ham, if we had some eggs, if we had some ham. You've got to work to get the aforementioned ham.

ACCEPT NO CONFESSIONS, TAKE NO PRISONERS This is a weekly talk show (perhaps call-in) where a local public official or public servant is questioned about his or her role and performance. This kind of show is always better if it's live, but you can make do with live on tape if you have to.

THEM AND US Here's a show to get the kids involved. You might want to

use those "kids of all ages." Why not set up a video pen pals exchange with someone faraway. If you're interested try using this *Newsletter* as a source. This is the way it works: one group does a program about their community, plays it on their cable system and then sends it to another group. The second group does a tape, plays it, along with the tape they received from

(continued on page 14)



Access Profile

by Mickey Brandt

NFLCP Region: Mid-Atlantic

Access Coordinator:
George Cuccia

Organization:
Cable Channel 7
P.O. Box 572
Vineland, NJ 08360

Cable System:
TelePrompTer-Vineland
19 N. East Ave.
Vineland, NJ 08360

Access cablecasting has made more than a slight impact on Vineland, a medium-sized city located in southern New Jersey. The 7,200 Vineland cable subscribers have been viewing 10 to 20 hours per week of locally-produced television since April, 1974. It is estimated that 25 percent of the community's residents have either appeared on the local channel or have helped to create or inspire local shows.

Channel 7 is administered by Public Access Productions, Inc. (PAP), a nonprofit and tax-exempt organization. PAP was initially organized by five individuals: a high school teacher, a radio announcer, two community organizers, and a photographer. Since the first public access programs in 1974, the organization has grown to include a board of directors representing all aspects of the Vineland community. Channel 7 provides many types of programs, and is now accepted as an alternative to the town's two newspapers and three radio stations.

Local sports, especially live high school football, is the most popular programming on Channel 7. Coverage of the municipal election in 1976, which included a volunteer crew of 30 people that kept viewers up to date on the returns and also provided video commentary and interviews from the various campaign headquarters, was the most acclaimed special programming.

The founding organizers of commu-



Louis Mazzoni (l) and Glenn Lillie (r) host, on set of Channel 7 program, "TV Dinner."

nity television in Vineland have worked hard to bring the experiment to fruition. They have tried to make cable subscribers in Vineland forget all stereotypes about the glamour and bigness of conventional television in order to understand community television. Cable Channel 7 is a *vehicle*—for the schools, the churches, the social agencies, and many others—to reach people in their own community through low-cost television transmissions.

PAP believes that the vehicle of local television, as it expands to meet its full potential, is "a live CB system with pictures" for the whole town to use. The programs that are made and shown on local television in Vineland all grow from its *availability for anyone to use*. The uses vary widely, both in technical quality and in content, and it remains difficult for many viewers to grasp this new medium. But with the firm base now established, this writer fully expects access television in Vineland to continue and to grow.

It was through the Cable Television Internship Program of the Alternate Media Center (AMC) that this author was able to make cable programming a profession instead of a hobby. Local funding sources (CETA, the city government, American Institute for Mental Studies, and advertisers) have provided the same opportunity for several other highly motivated staff peo-

ple. TelePrompTer Cable TV supplied some used equipment, plus the construction work to provide two upstream origination points.

Financial problems, and their reflection in poor transmission quality, have always been present, but have never been fatal. Right now, Channel 7 is anticipating a large grant from the city's Community Development Program to purchase badly needed new equipment.

In addition to sports, current programming includes regular programs by the public school system, the Cumberland County Guidance Center, several religious groups, and government meetings. Weekly spots on cultural and civic events, record reviews, and six hours of "cable radio," where young people are gaining valuable skills in communications techniques while entertaining themselves and their listeners, are also cablecast.

Many call-in formats are employed on Channel 7, most often when there is a local political or social issue that people are anxious to discuss. Training is another ongoing function of the staff, since new energy and new ideas are always needed to sustain the operation.

There are many obstacles to stable community programming on cable television. The Vineland project has over-

(continued on page 13)

Legal Briefs

by Steven Vedro

Two important dockets are now before the FCC—one is a proposal to fund access services from the new profits to be made by pay cable, the other may affect the future of the dedicated access channel on older 12-channel CATV systems.

Citizens' Groups Ask for New Look at Access Funding

Several citizens' groups have filed a "petition for rulemaking" with the FCC seeking new funds for community service cable programming. The petition, filed jointly by the Office of Communications of the United Church of Christ, a consortium of Catholic broadcasters, and the Consumers Union, points to pay cable as the profit maker that will allow cable operators to subsidize local programming.

The 30-page petition stated that community-service cablecasting is a crucial part of meeting the public's need for diversity. If this service is being held up by lack of funds, and if the government is unwilling to directly subsidize access, then the government should order that *all revenues* generated by cable systems be used to help underwrite access, according to the petition.

This inquiry follows in the wake of the September 30, 1977 ruling that allowed municipalities, in certain circumstances, to charge the same 3-5 percent franchise fee for pay services they had been charging for regular subscriber service.

The UCC petition points out that the FCC, in the Blue Sky days of 1972, pinned its new CATV rules (20-channel minimum, one-for-one channel capacity, 2-way data, 4 access channels, etc.) on the growth of *nonbroadcast* services. Now that all of these rules have been changed or postponed, the petitioners ask, why not let the success of pay-TV begin to fund some of the public service goals of cable lost in the

recent past? Money is needed, they say, in order to make access really meaningful:

"Access itself means more than simply passive provision of an open television camera before which members of the public can speak or perform. It means an active effort by the cable operator to provide adequate facilities and trained personnel to help representative individuals and groups within the community to use television effectively as a means of communication and self-expression. The operator should be required to seek out and encourage such community organizations as churches, civic associations, consumer groups, educational institutions, ethical associations, government bodies, orchestras, theatre and dance groups and other cultural enterprises, professional societies and unions to use its facilities. The public service, once established, must receive adequate publicity and promotion, so the public will become aware of its existence and be stimulated to view its programs. It may well be that some funding from

pay-cable revenues can be made available directly to local community programming groups, *as we have proposed.*" (emphasis mine)

Ralph Jennings, of the Office of Communication, says that only by linking pay-TV's growth to the needs of access centers and producers can access survive the tight times ahead. Otherwise, he says, commercial pressures will drive access from its one channel (see other story this column) or simply starve it out. He urges NFLCP members to support the petition, and to write to the FCC endorsing it. He says that access groups can tell the FCC that they want more or different types of support, but that it is important that the FCC hears that access is worth underwriting as a matter of national public interest. It sounds like a good beginning to me. If you write to the FCC be sure to indicate that you are commenting on *Petition for Rulemaking RM-2985*. One letter will do, but five extra copies makes it a formal FCC filing. ■

Saturated Systems May Put Squeeze on Access

Docket 21472, "Amendment of Part 76... With Respect to Saturated Cable Television Systems," is the FCC's attempt to deal with the problem of fitting more than 12 signals on a 12-channel system. The problem, of course, stems in part from the Commission's own rollback of its 20-channel rebuild rule which was to have taken place last March. The Commission, in Docket 20508 (see *NFLCP Newsletter*, Vol. 1 #1), gave access *one* dedicated channel, down from four, and moved up the deadline to accommodate 20 channels and other new cable services until June of 1986. But only a year after that decision the FCC is finding that many systems are running out of channel space. This new squeeze is not due to the boom in access, but to the growing number of new over-the-air "specialty" stations (foreign language, religious, automated, pay, etc.) that fall within the "must carry" rules.

Cable systems must carry all commercial broadcasters within their 35-mile coverage zone, all educational stations within a grade B contour (usually 40-75 miles), all nearby translators,

and those stations not falling under the above categories that are "significantly viewed" by homes in the CATV system area. With the growth of new stations and translators some CATV systems built to carry 8 or 9 signals are getting caught short—too many stations qualifying for "must carry" status. Cable operators *can* go ahead and rebuild their systems or add converters to carry these signals, but most come running to the FCC asking for waivers and advice. The problem facing access people is that their dedicated channel starts looking mighty attractive to cable operators and the new broadcasters who feel that they have something more popular to put on that channel!

In its proposed rulemaking, the FCC takes the position that will try to balance the rights of local TV stations to "must carry" status, and the public's right to maximum program diversity at reasonable costs, with the dangers of "burdening an emerging industry" with impossible costs. The FCC says it will consider allowing CATV systems to bounce duplicated network signals off of some channels, or to add converters for special audience stations allowing the public to pay extra if they

(continued on page 14)

Citizens Air Gripes at NAB Meeting



"We are not where we should be in portraying minorities and ethnics," says Van Gordon Sauter of CBS-TV.

"We probably have to do a lot more," admits Alfred Schneider of ABC-TV.

"I have a clear conscience even though I dislike a lot of it personally," says Hermino Traviesas of NBC-TV.

The National Association of Broadcasters' Radio and Television Code Board took to the road this past fall with a series of "town meetings" held in cities across the country. In search of citizens' ideas and opinions on broadcast programming, the NAB board met up with more than their share of concern and controversy.

The traveling road show got quite a workout in Boston where several hundred people gathered in New England Life Hall to air their ideas before the board. Questions and comments at the open forum were varied, with people representing such diverse viewpoints as "Stop the ERA" and the Krugerrand question.

On the whole, citizens' questions and comments were critical of the broadcast industry's practices. Several issues dominated discussion, most notably the issues of stations accepting advertising for the Krugerrand, the controversial South African gold coin, and stereotyping—of minorities, women, and the elderly—in programming.

The question of public access to the broadcast medium was also put before the board, which included representatives from ABC, CBS, and NBC-TV as

well as CBS radio. The code board is a voluntary body of representatives from the broadcast industry who set up standards and codes but have limited powers of jurisdiction.

Citizens speaking out against stations accepting advertising for the Krugerrand claimed that broadcasters who did so were supporting the racist regime in South Africa.

The question of whether or not to accept advertising of products related to political problems is up to the individual station outlet and not the broadcast industry or the code board, NAB spokesmen responded.

"The industry does not prohibit the acceptance of products related to political problems," said Alfred Schneider of ABC. "If we did, we'd be constantly faced with taking sides."

Anti-Krugerrand spokespeople continued to press the point, charging the board with "moral evasiveness" and demanding equal time on the air to respond to what they called the "political content" of the ads.

Again the board hedged, shifting responsibility to the local stations.

"From the stations' standpoint, time could be made available, but we can't speak for the stations," said Board Member Michael Kievman, of Atlanta, Georgia.

However, Board Member Hermino Traviesas of NBC admitted the subject was being discussed very seriously by that network.

"I will consider the input of this meeting when I go back," he told the gathering.

NAB code board members also had

a difficult time fielding questions on the issue of minority stereotyping in programming. Citizens complained about the stereotyping of Arabs, women, Chicanos, blacks and the elderly.

Quoting the NAB code regarding the 'special sensitivity necessary in portraying sex, color, and creed,' one citi-

(continued on page 13)

Bennett: How Blue is Midnight?

by Randy Feldman

"At no time did we ever intend to produce a pornographic television program," "Midnight Blue" producer Alex Bennett told participants at a recent National Federation of Local Cable Programmers meeting held at William Paterson College in Wayne, New Jersey.

Bennett, the keynote speaker at the Mid-Atlantic region conference, gave a 45-minute presentation on the history of "Midnight Blue," a controversial erotic cable program aired on Manhattan Cable's leased channel J.

Bennett said he felt there was a need for an "erotic sexual program" on television in Manhattan. Knowing full well that commercial television would not carry such fare, Bennett started looking for an alternate means of television communication. He finally hit upon cable television as the next best means to get his program to the public. He spoke to his friend Al Goldstein,

(continued on page 14)

At this time, there are eight regional groups into which the membership of the National Federation of Local Cable Programmers is divided. All are newly developing, each in its own unique way. This column is the *NFLCP Newsletter's* forum through which each group may express and exchange ideas concerning their regional growth and development.

Now is the time for local cable programmers to develop strong ties through regional meetings. The Northeastern group, in an effort to develop regional awareness in formerly isolated cable producers, has adopted the practice of holding each conference in a different state.

Mid-Atlantic Region

Regional Coordinator:

Randy Feldman
65 Sykes Ave.
Livingston, NJ 07039
(201) 992-1448/7710

The Fall meeting of the Mid-Atlantic region featured several guest speakers, most notably Alex Bennett, producer of the controversial erotic cable program "Midnight Blue."

Other speakers at the October conference, held at William Paterson College in Wayne, New Jersey were Stu Riskin, director of programming for UA Columbia Cablevision of New Jersey, and Mike Rhea, editor of Reuters print cable service.

Bennett, the keynote speaker, spoke for 45 minutes on the history of "Midnight Blue." (See story on page 00.)

Riskin related his ideas on local programming, saying he favored the concept of "narrow-casting" as opposed to "broadcasting." He said UA Columbia, which serves parts of Bergen, Passic and Essex counties with extensive coverage of local events, does not intend to become a broadcasting station.

According to Riskin, UA Columbia airs over 65 hours of local programming per week. He said that as the cable system grows, the programming department will be expanded even

more. One of UA Columbia's most popular programs, Riskin said, is weekly football coverage with the station's color remote vans. Other UA Columbia programming concerns health, politics, community news and the arts in and around northern New Jersey.

Rhea, of Reuters news service, discussed the relationship between the newswire and cable television. Reuters News Service sells its news and feature service to 20 cable systems in the New York City area, Rhea said. In addition to a national newswire, the service also includes information on pet care, horoscopes, sports and financial matters.

NFLCP members questioned Rhea on the feasibility of community access to the cable wire service.

"There is a technical capability for community access to the cable wire," he responded, "but my bosses would probably be against it."

Rhea said he is now trying to persuade his bosses to start a northern New Jersey report on the wire using journalism students from William Paterson College.

Conference participants were given a tour of WPSC radio, the college station, which is the only radio station in New Jersey currently broadcasting on cable television. WPSC is now carried on UA Columbia Cablevision and plans are underway for expansion to other cable systems in the near future.

The results of the regional business meeting are as follows:

Randy Feldman was voted to continue as Regional Coordinator, replacing Nancy Jesuale. Votes were also cast for the three positions on the newly formed executive board. Larry Staab, of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, was voted Steering Committee Liaison; Rich Fishkin, also of Pittsburgh, was voted Community Education Committee Liaison; and Mickey Brandt, of Vineland, New Jersey, was voted Advocacy Committee Liaison.

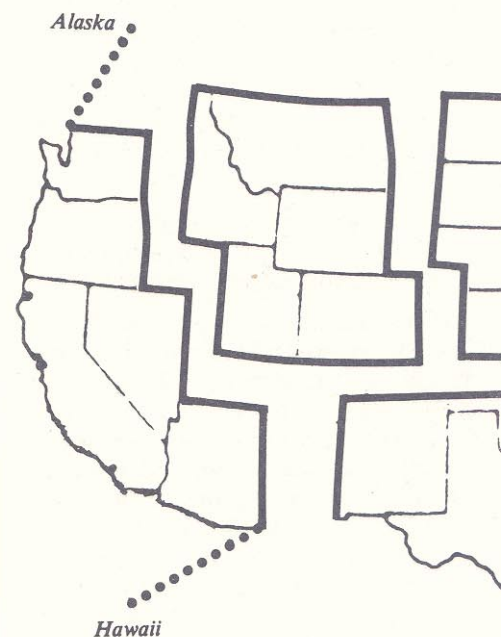
The next Mid-Atlantic regional meeting will be held in Lebanon, Pennsylvania in early spring.

Northeastern Region

Regional Coordinator:

Sallie Fischer
P.O. Box 75
Derby, CT 06418
(203) 735-6203 (days)
(203) 735-7075 (evenings, weekends)

At press time, the Northeast region, which celebrated its first anniversary in November, is planning a meeting at the Boston Film and Video Foundation (BF/VF), Boston, Massachusetts, February 4-5. The two days include a fundraising workshop with representa-



tives from the National Endowments for the Arts and Humanities; a panel discussion on "Documentary Video and Film: For Public What?" with guest speakers Richard Leacock (filmmaker), Maurice Jacobson (Independent Video Group) and Video Newsreel; and special videotape showings.

Committee and business sessions are also scheduled. Among the agenda items is the selection of regional representatives for the NFLCP's National Conference in May.

Access activities in Albany, New York took a step forward this fall when Stephanie Stewart was named Access

L REPORTS

Director for two new cable systems in the area, Rensselaer County Cablevision and Bethlehem Video Inc., subsidiaries of A-R Telecommunications of Waltham, Massachusetts. Stewart was Schenectady Cablevision's first access coordinator, creating the position in January 1975 and building the Schenectady Access Center into a thriving hotbed of video enthusiasts. Stewart is responsible for developing an access program in the franchised communities and building separate studio and access facilities for both systems.

Primrose Oliver has succeeded Stew-



art in Schenectady and is implementing a \$75,000 CETA grant to establish a cable communications center at Schenectady's City Hill, in addition to facilitating operation of the access center. Oliver served two years as president of the Schenectady Access Cable Council and is also a member of the Board of Directors.

With leadership from the New York State Commission on Cable Television, a plan to interconnect the six major cable systems in New York State's Capitol District is underway. Access producers anticipate that the interconnection will allow programming of a

regional nature to be cablecast in all communities simultaneously, thus eliminating the time-consuming tape bicycling procedures.

The region has met its annual goal of 50 members, and extends a warm welcome to its newest (as of press time): Marilyn DeAngelis, John Marshall, Don Schaefer, Betsy Williams, Gerard Frank and Nancy Moloney of Massachusetts; Chuck Sherwood in New York; Peter Brown in Vermont; and Dorothy Ahlgren in New Hampshire. South Yarmouth (Massachusetts) Community Access Programming has joined as an organizational member.

Mountain Region

Regional Coordinator:
Pat Tierney
Grassroots Network
P.O. Box 2006
Aspen, CO 81611
(303) 925-7784

Central States

Regional Coordinator:
Don Smith
Community Channel 7
Monroe County Public Library
303 E. Kirkwood
Bloomington, IN 47401
(812) 339-2271

NFLCP members in this region have not met since summer, but all have been active. VAC in Columbus, Ohio has just completed a changeover to color. Randy Van Dalsen in Ann Arbor creates an astounding number of programs per week. Some of them: "After Hours," on which a video disc jockey spins records and reports community events; "TeeVee Trevia," which recently produced a satire of a telethon. The format was a benefit for the dread disease: frog bite. Other specials include coverage of the recent Michigan House hearing on alternative cancer therapies and a slide/tape pres-

entation by the League of Women Voters entitled "Safe Drinking Water." The ongoing program "Black Notes" continues to feature black musicians and dancers.

In Bloomington, Indiana, Channel Seven, the Access/Library channel, has taken over coverage of Bloomington City Council meetings, formerly taped by the local PBS affiliate, WTIU. The City Council voted to buy a time base corrector for the channel, but funding is tight. Channel Seven is pursuing several grant possibilities and seeking to expand services to the community.

Midwestern Region

Regional Coordinator:
Sue Buske
763 1/2 Chestnut St.
Dubuque, IA 52001
(319) 556-1009

A lively question and answer period with Sharon Briley of the FCC Cable Bureau highlighted the Midwest Region's December 3 meeting. Forty people throughout the Midwest met at Warburg Seminary, Dubuque, Iowa, to discuss the future momentum of access in the Midwest.

Claudia Crask, Communications for Change (Chicago), presented a tape produced by local students. The tape, "Why Tower Fell," was recently awarded the Gold Plaque Award in the student category at the Chicago International Film Festival. Crask outlined specific techniques she uses to get high quality production from her students. She also stressed the importance of creating strong positive relationships with all teachers and administration when dealing with a school setting.

Jim Walsh, Midwest Video, presented a demonstration of various new pieces of equipment, including the Betamax Portapak and the Sony DX1610 color camera. Walsh answered many questions about equipment specifications and clarified a number of misconceptions about time base correctors.

(continued on page 17)

L REPORTS

Community Education

Youth Corps Workshop

by Jean Rice

Jean Rice was the founder and director of the Neighborhood Youth Corps Video Workshop in Madison, Wisconsin from 1973-1975.

In May 1974, five high school students stood on a Madison, Wisconsin street corner, asking people their opinions of upcoming rape prevention legislation, and videotaping the responses. These on-the-street interviews were used in a cable television documentary entitled "Rape in Black and White." The high school students were part of the Madison Neighborhood Youth Corps (NYC) Video Workshop and the documentary they produced contained interviews with rape victims, staff members of the Rape Crisis Center, the district attorney, detectives, and doctors. Prior to taping interviews the students dramatized a rape trial on tape. When they completed the interviews, they watched the trial tape again, decided it was more fiction than fact, and restaged it. Producing the documentary on rape had been a learning experience. Liz Yabbarra, a sophomore noted, "I was able to talk to people on the street and ask questions and opinions which I normally wouldn't do... It also helped me understand. I found out that I was able to express myself to people."

The initial 15-member NYC Video Workshop was a four-month experiment begun in 1973 with a local bank contributing \$200 for a technician's salary. Local equipment dealers supplied videotape, a book store provided graphic materials, a nearby cable system offered the use of studio facilities, and colleges provided portable equipment. Some instructors donated their time, and the Neighborhood Youth Corps paid participants the minimum wage. At the end of the four-month period, the students and instructors evaluated the program and proclaimed it an overwhelming success in terms of the quality of programming and individual development. The Video Workshop then sponsored community showings and discussions of the tape for parents, interested city residents, NYC

staff members, government officials and the regional Manpower board (which funds NYC). A request was then sent to the Chicago Manpower office for financial support for the project (e.g., instructors, salaries, equipment). Because the NYC usually finds jobs for students of low-income families in state agencies, nonprofit groups, schools, etc., applying for salaries for instructors or supervisors was unprecedented. The initial answer from the Chicago Office was negative, but the local representatives, believing in the potential of long-term video workshops, said the local Manpower board would be visiting Chicago the next day to fight the decision. Before five o'clock that afternoon, Chicago called back to approve the request.

Since 1973 the number of instructors and participants has increased. (The unprecedented decision to support the training of students laid the foundation for a graphics workshop that was funded by NYC.) The NYC students have produced programs on the mayoral race, co-ops, raku pottery making, the problems migrant workers face when they move to the city, the Norwegian Independence Day Celebration in Stoughton, Wisconsin, race relations in the high school, day care, alternative education, and the airport. The programs were shown at churches, schools, and community centers and on two cable systems.

Participants in the Video Workshop learned the technical and aesthetic skills required to produce television programs, and developed cognitive and organizational skills as they researched information, organized productions, and conducted interviews. Despite initial racial tensions, language problems, and differing attention spans, the group cooperation necessary for video productions laid the groundwork for harmony between members. All the productions were on issues and topics chosen by Workshop members. Clara Ines Valezuela, a sophomore, stated at the end of a four-month workshop, "The group has changed, we are very close now and we always say what we want to say. Hearing all kinds of opinions helps us to have a better opinion

of ourselves."

During production, students met people from various backgrounds and communities. Through meeting and talking with people, the participants became more aware of community issues, concerns, and political processes, and got more involved in local activities. Carlos Balenzuela, a senior, recalled, "Because of the Video Workshop I became interested in the race for mayor. I was able to express what I felt about it. If it weren't for the Video Workshop, I wouldn't even have

(continued on page 16)

National Steering Committee Sets Priorities for 1978

The NFLCP National Steering Committee met January 8 and 9 in Derby, Connecticut to evaluate the organization's performance in 1977 and establish priorities for the coming year. The Steering Committee is composed of Task Force liaison persons (Community Education, Advocacy, Finance and Newsletter), regional representatives, National Officers (NSC Coordinator, Treasurer, and Membership Coordinator), and at-large members.

First order of business was to select a new NSC Coordinator. Sue Buske, membership coordinator, volunteered for the position that Susan Bednarczyk had filled since the NFLCP was founded in July, 1976. The national mailing address was also established as Buske's: 763 1/2 Chestnut St., Dubuque, IA 52001. In the future, all mail to the Federation will go to this address.

Task forces reported on 1977 activities, then set priorities and estimated budgets for 1978. Members of the Finance Committee, after hearing the reports, established fundraising priorities to meet the expressed needs.

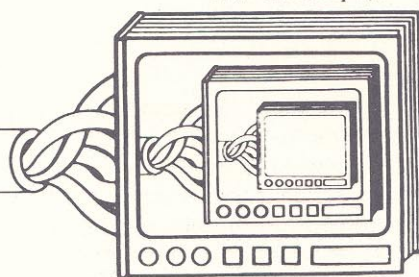
A committee was selected to compile all the information into an annual report which will be published prior to the National Convention in July, 1978.

In other business the NSC made plans for the first annual convention and the tape/film festival (see stories on page 3).

Minutes of the meeting will soon be mailed to members, and annual reports will be sent as soon as they are printed.

Federation

Trunkline



Of National Importance: The Steering Committee would like to give a special thank-you to our sponsor members *John Marshall* (Somerville, MA), *York Community Access TV* (York, PA), and *Ted Aronson* (Ft. Lauderdale). Who else supports NFLCP? Organizations like *Urban Planning Aid* (Boston), *United Methodist Communications* (New York), *Portable Channel* (Rochester), the *Fridley Cable TV Commission* (Minn.), *Madison Community Access Center* (Wis.), *Covenant Cable TV* (Millville, NJ), *Community Video Center* (Lebanon, PA), *Public Issues Network* (Washington, D.C.), *Video Action Center* (Columbus, IN), *Tri-City Regional Library* (Rome, GA), *Telecommunications Group at NCSU* (Raleigh, NC), *S. Yarmouth Community Access* (S. Yarmouth, MA), and *Dubuque Community Access TV* (Iowa)... Welcome to our new Southwest Regional Coordinator *Joel Goldblatt* (Austin), our new Steering Committee member representing the Mid-Atlantic Region *Larry Staab* (Pittsburgh), and *Justin Galler* (Chicago), NSC member for the Midwest Region... The December Steering Committee meeting was spent making plans for issuing our first Annual Report to Members and preparing for an important January planning session to lay out NFLCP strategies for FY 1978.

Kudos to the individuals from *Portable Channel* who made a spur-of-the-moment trip to assist NFLCP Community Education in appearing on a special NFLCP panel at the recent National Association of Educational Broadcasters conference in Washington. *Jean Rice* led the panel that also included *Ann McIntosh* and the innovative access Program Director from WHA-TV in Madison. Jean also served as the NFLCP representative to the National Council for Cooperative Arrangements conference later in the week on their panel about cable and community colleges... *Advocacy Committee* assistance has been a blessing to *Madison Community Access*

Center in their effort to hook a character generator into their public access channel. *Advocacy* has prepared a paper on the local issue which is being studied for its wider implications by the FCC.

Changes for the Better: *Reed Brown* of Holland, Michigan has called in to alert NFLCP to the formation of the *Michigan Association for Cable Communications Development*, a coalition of cable users from all professions seeking to create a better climate for access in the state. They will be meeting in January to solidify their group. Hope they will be in touch with Central States Coordinator *Don Smith*... Member of the *Newsletter* staff and Steering Committee member *Michael Aronson* is leaving Massachusetts to take a job as the radio manager for STAND, Inc. of Derby, Connecticut... Former Southwest Regional Coordinator *Paul Smolen* has been successful in assisting the Texas Regional Service Center to secure a \$59,584 satellite planning grant from HEW's National Institute of Education.

Programming Department: A salute of the First Order to Chicago videomakers *Claudia Crask* and the late *David Affelder* for winning a Gold Plaque for Student Video at the prestigious Chicago International Film Festival. "Why Tower Fell" was a collaboration with Chicago high school students. Inquiries should be addressed to Claudia, c/o Communications for Change, 22 W. Erie St., Chicago 60601... Award-winning local origination call-in program "Live on Six" celebrated its third anniversary on Madison cable in November. Congratulations to producer *Gary Knowles*... *Marion Vuilleumier* of the Cape Cod Writers' Conference reports that *Cape Cod Cablevision* has been helpful in producing their call-in series "Books and the World" with noted authors, editors,

journalists, and publishers. If any of our library readers are interested in learning more, contact Mrs. Vuilleumier at Box 111, West Hyannisport, MA 02672... After the recent *Community Education* mailing on regional programming activity to NFLCP members, access users in *East Lansing, Michigan* informed us that their city has a total of six access channels in use—one public access, three educational, one municipal, and one library. The channels are programmed by character generators when taped or live programming is not being cablecast. With approximately 30 hours of programming going on the public access channel alone, who can say that communities do not use the channels provided for them?

International News: Did you know that NFLCP has an active member in Berlin? If not, meet *Michael Tauchert*, a videomaker/access enthusiast who met programmers in the East on his summer visit to the U.S. and decided to keep in touch via NFLCP... *Michael Barrett* of Milton Keynes' Channel 40 outside London hopes that NFLCP members here will not forget their sister video organization in Great Britain *COM COM*, a regionally organized association of independents, artists, documentarians, social change advocates, and cable users. Milton Keynes is the last remaining cable experiment in England—and most successful, according to those in the know. Michael's desire is to have a three-way satellite interconnection among video centers on our two continents as well as Australia. In the meantime, he would like to meet U.S. videomakers at the NFLCP National Convention. Would you like to know more about the Milton Keynes experience? NFLCP members can obtain a profile on the programming and the people of Channel 40 by writing *Community Education* (c/o Jean Rice, 134 South St., Northampton, MA 01060)... *Judy Stalling* of Australia, a recent visitor to New York, is involved in a consortium of videomakers also and desires an international exchange of information. Australian video producers have no access to broadcast or cable television and liken their situation to that which existed in the U.S. six or seven years ago. For now, videomakers at the various community media centers keep in

(continued on page 14)

MIT Film Section Holds Access Forum

Independent video and film makers, community television organizers, students and public access advocates shared two days of discussion and screenings at a colloquium on "Public Access and Community TV" in Cambridge, Massachusetts on November 28 and 29. Sponsored by the MIT Film Section, the colloquium enabled individuals from diverse backgrounds and organizations to discuss their work and its relationship to the community media movement. Guest speakers included NFLCP and Downtown Community TV representatives, Red Burns from the Alternate Media Center, Nancy Cain of Mediabus, and Tim Kennedy, Skyriver Project.

The colloquium began with an overview of public access presented by Jean Rice, Michael Aronson and Sallie Fischer of the NFLCP. FCC regulations, franchising processes, staffing and funding of access centers, and programming were the focus of Rice's presentation. A nationwide sampling of community videotapes was also included. Aronson spoke about his experience with municipal access and Fischer related the history and present status of the Mainstream Video project at STAND, Inc., Derby, Connecticut.

A question and answer session following the presentation emphasized community involvement and support as the most critical factors in the success of access. Discussion about the economics of access and the relative merits of quality versus quantity in programming followed.

Victor Sanchez of Downtown Community TV (NYC) began his presentation, "Community Video: How Important is Cable?" with a tape about downtown Community TV that was aired on the Public Broadcasting series, "VTR." Downtown Community Video is located in New York City's Chinatown district and does not use cable extensively because the level of cable penetration in that area is low. Instead, most Downtown Community TV tapes are played on closed circuit set-ups in community centers. According to Sanchez, this type of distribution reaches the group's maximum audience.

Downtown Community TV offers nine workshops each week and trains

from 2,500 to 4,000 people each year. According to Sanchez, they are the only free workshops left in New York.

Sanchez also showed the latest of the Downtown Community TV tapes to be aired on public television, "Health Care: Your Money or Your Life." The tapes uses a private and a public New York hospital to demonstrate the politics of health care in the United States.

Sanchez said his group would like to start a local broadcast television station for Chinatown.

"There aren't enough downtown community TVs to get the real message out," he said. "We specialize in minority culture and radical politics—the Puerto Rican Socialist Party, Cubans, and other groups. These people never have any access to other media. We try to provide an answer for them."

Red Burns of the Alternate Media Center (AMC) led a session on "Four-Way Video in Reading, Pennsylvania: Senior Citizens Produce Their Own

TV." She showed samples of programming produced by senior citizens and discussed community interaction with the project, which was funded by the National Science Foundation.

"How do you let people know you're there? We inserted ourselves in that community," she said. "In effect, we had to create community."

According to Burns, four-way video made the Reading cable system a system that brings many different people from the community together.

"People sit and talk by way of four-way TV as though they were in their living rooms," she said.

A presentation by Nancy Cain of Mediabus called "Independent Video Makers Run Their Own TV Broadcast Station," kicked off the second day of the colloquium. Mediabus, of New York City, produces a weekly program every Saturday at 7 p.m. which reaches people within a mile-and-a-half to two-mile radius. More than 200 programs have been broadcast over the past four years.

Cain also showed two of her own
(continued on next page)

Pittsburgh Holds "Town Meetings" for Franchise

The Labor and Industry Committee of the NAACP's Pittsburgh branch and the University of Pittsburgh's Department of Speech and Theatre Arts have been awarded a \$15,000 grant to stimulate and measure citizen interest in the development of cable television (CATV) in Pittsburgh.

A proposed ordinance to permit CATV operation in Pittsburgh is currently being drafted.

The NAACP/Pitt proposal is funded by the Public Committee for the Humanities in Pennsylvania.

In January, 1978, the co-sponsors began a three-month series of ten seminars or town meetings in local Pittsburgh communities to promote community discussion on the far-reaching humanistic implications of cable technology in an urban environment.

The town meetings were designed to include video and film presentations, lectures, and smaller group workshops aimed at informing the participants

about cable television. In addition, the design allows for participants to devise a community-generated agenda of needs and use priorities, to assess the community's response to the likely and preferred impact of cable TV, and to explore how the community itself can and should use a cable system, according to the co-sponsors.

Larry Staab (Pittsburgh Community Video) has been sitting in on the planning sessions for these town meetings. He reports that the planners are discouraging public participation in the town meetings and inviting only Democratic and Republican Committee persons.

When Staab inquired about this policy, a planning board member said, "It was an oversight and of course we can't exactly turn people away." The spokesman justified this "oversight" by claiming it is necessary to control participation for the purposes of statistical evaluation, and to divide participants into select small groups.

"I feel this series of town meetings is extremely important to the future of community participation in Pittsburgh CATV. I will make every effort to make sure the 'oversight' is corrected," said Staab. ■

Access Forum

(continued from previous page)

tapes entitled "Harriet" and "Sharon." "Harriet" documents the everyday life of a woman and "Sharon" tells the story of a battered woman.

MIT Film Section students presented tapes about everyday people and events around Boston in a session called

Downtown Community TV, AMC, Mediabus, Skyriver and NFLCP were represented.

"Feeding the Cable." Film section students also cablecast the colloquium on the MIT campus system and to Harvard University.

The final session of the colloquium, "Eskimo Television: Film and Video for Social Evolution," was led by Tim Kennedy, director of the Skyriver (Alaska) project.

"Skyriver was people interpreting their own culture without anthropologists interfering," according to Kennedy. "We used both media with local residents to effect social action."

Kennedy described the project as an attempt to marry process and content. He said work was always presented (to a government official) in the presence of a community representative.

"Everything was specific. The work

bureaucrats and other outsiders because it necessitates formal presentation in the isolated environment of a screening room. Video, on the other hand, is less formal and more accessible, and therefore more useful within the community itself, according to Kennedy.

In reminiscing about his experience working with Eskimo people, Kennedy noted that government bureaucrats imposed their ways and attitudes on the Eskimo villagers. Because of this, he said, Eskimos had come to define themselves by what they read and saw about themselves in the media. The Skyriver project enabled them to take more control over the information disseminated and helped changed that image.

Eleven hours of tape of the colloquium will be available through the NFLCP tape library. For more information about the participants, contact: Ann McIntosh, P.O. Box 119, Cambridge, MA 02142. ■

NAB Meeting

(continued from page 3)

zen asked, "Why do you always depict blacks and Chicanos as buffoons? When are you going to depict blacks as people who can be general managers of TV stations?"

Throughout the questioning, board members defended the portrayal of minorities, saying the total picture was balanced and not completely one-sided. However, when confronted with specific examples of stereotyping (e.g., "The Jeffersons") board members conceded that not all was up to par.

"We probably have to do a lot more," said Alfred Schneider of ABC. "It's not a question of ignoring it, but a question of doing more about it."

Michael Aronson of the NFLCP questioned the board on public access policy.

Citing the NAB code's pledge to community responsibility, Aronson asked the board, "What is the place of public access in your medium?"

"We have great difficulty in getting the public to come out and say what they want to say on 'talkback' segments," answered Board Chairman Robert Rich.

When questioned further on the idea of mandatory first-come, first-served

wasn't meant to stand on its own, but was part of a process," said Kennedy.

Skyriver villagers had complete editing control over the films and tapes. They used tapes to convey their issues and needs to government officials and to stimulate discussion within the community.

Film is a more effective medium with

access, Rich said, "We don't favor that because existing programs provide this."

Aronson persisted. "The airwaves and frequency space are a natural resource," he said. "An hour of broadcast time might not be such an outrageous idea."

It was evident that Aronson's remarks did not sway the board's position on access.

"It's the industry's position that the broadcaster control the channel 24 hours a day," responded one board member. "With mandatory access the broadcaster would lose control."

When asked how they viewed their jobs as NAB code board members, in view of the fact that most people seem insulted by the total product of com-

mercial television, board members spoke with frustration mixed with pride.

"Nobody ever seems to feel that we do everything right ever," said ABC's Schneider.

NBC's Traviesas said he had a "clear conscience," even though he personally disliked much of broadcast fare.

"The problem is filling all those hours every day—we spend millions that you never see," he said.

Said Van Gordon Sauter of CBS, who has a background in broadcast journalism, "I came to this with a certain degree of cynicism but I'm impressed by the concerns brought to television. We go and get beat up all the time." ■

Access Profile

(continued from page 5)

come most of them, except for establishing consistent sources of income and the technical limitations of cablecasting. By working with the NFLCP, Channel 7 hopes to assist others with these obstacles, and help prove to the cable industry and to the world that access programming is more than just a good concept—it's also a good reality.

Editors' Note—Since presstime, additional information has been received regarding Vineland's Channel 7. On December 1st, the station was shifted from Channel 7 to Channel 2 on the cable.

Community access will no longer have the whole channel, but will be shared with local origination. ■

Flip the Dial

(continued from page 4)

the first group, and sends both back. You play their first tape and your second tape, and so on. You might even start several exchange groups after others in your community get the itch to put their two cents' worth on tape.

STUDIO NONE Here's the idea: it's a wide open, free form, community happening program that can include everything under no roof. Go out with a portapak and explore and interact with your city or town. This "studio" knows no bounds. Visit your neighbors, talk with them, interact, and put it on tape.

VIDEO VALENTINES What a unique way to tell your heart throb that he or she is the object of your affection. Sure it's good only once a year, but what a show! Go into the community propelled by media releases saying you'll be available for a week (or two) before February 14 to record homespun verse and free form greetings at

the corner of Whatever and Anywhere. Get the mayor and police chief to do one, along with other notables. This program is a great way to get a lot of people watching people in the community express their love for one another, as well as a lot of people watching access. "Video Valentines" could also become a "free will donation of a buck" affair to raise funds for the access center's microwave unit, for example. Perhaps you could include—for a buck—a stamped postcard that the sender could address and drop in the mailbox so that his or her valentine would be sure to know about his or her public immortalization.

MORNING SCENE A day time, live, call-in, variety show can do a lot of good things for access viewers, especially as an alternative to the games, soaps and reruns on the tube. Exchange recipes, do an astrology column, a Dear Abby column, interviews, a bit of news, and just plain coffee klatching. This program may entail a great deal of work but it *can* reach an audience that is often neglected by access. ■

Midnight Blue

(continued from page 7)

publisher of *Screw Magazine*, who agreed to back the program financially, under the condition that only Bennett, as producer, would have ultimate control over the program's content.

The theory behind the program is a simple one: bring to the studio to the massage parlor, said Bennett. The program contains sex information and sexual humor.

"'Midnight Blue' is and always will be tamer than the hardest picture containing pornography on Home Box Office," Bennett said. "The program is not even on *Hustler's* level."

After moving to the leased public access channel, where it was possible to sell commercial time, "Midnight Blue" ran into obscenity problems with Manhattan Cable TV and its parent company, Time Inc. Time Inc. claimed the program violated the FCC rules and regulations on obscene and indecent material and removed it from the air. After many legal battles, "Midnight Blue" finally emerged victorious and was put back on Manhattan Cable under a new name, "Midnight Blue's America."

Almost every program aired as

"Midnight Blue" was rerun on "Midnight Blue's America," according to Bennett. He said the new program is basically the same, although the showing of male genitalia is now banned.

"I can't understand it, there is nothing wrong with the female body but the male's is obscene," Bennett commented.

Manhattan Cable and the producers of "Midnight Blue's America" are now working side by side, but there is no telling when the fight will flare up again. ■

Federation Trunkline

(continued from page 11)

touch with "Video Newsreel," a composite dubbed onto cassettes which are distributed to the participants quarterly. Judy has agreed to be in contact with videomakers here to see if an inter-continental satellite transmission among community video users can occur.

Until Next Time: Tell everyone you know about the upcoming local programmers' conference in spring 1978. ...Be in touch with your Regional Coordinator about upcoming events.

Legal Briefs

(continued from page 6)

wanted to receive such "specialty stations," or to have new stations be carried on a part-time basis only. You may note that many of these "solutions" are similar to ones proposed for dealing with access channel limitations, and there is always the possibility that access might be put back into the "specialty" category. In fact, while the FCC currently requires that one dedicated access channel be part of the basic CATV service (FCC 74-384 at para. 83), the new rulemaking asks for public comment as to "whether such cable-originated programming... should be displaced from full channel carriage to accommodate mandatory (broadcast) signals."

It is important that access users let the FCC know that access channels are being used and are significantly meeting the communications needs of many local communities. With the growth of pay-cable and satellite importation of new broadcast signals, many CATV operators will be looking hard at their "money-losing access channel(s)." It is important that access doesn't get squeezed out in the process.

The NFLCP would like to hear from groups who may be affected by a "saturated system" ruling. Please send your comments to the *Newsletter*. The deadline for submitting comments to the FCC on the matter of "saturated systems" was January 23 and February 22 for replies. If you don't have access to the initial comments to write a formal reply, you can still send an informal letter. Indicate that you are commenting on Docket 21472 on your envelope and in the heading of your letter or comment and send a copy to the *Newsletter* as well. ■

...Be on watch for information about choosing delegates to conduct business at the National Convention... Urge your co-workers to join the FEDERATION!

The editors welcome contributions to "Trunk Line" from all readers. Please send items to the *Newsletter*, P.O. Box 119, Cambridge, MA 02142. Continue to send information for Regional Reports to your Regional Coordinator.

Cable Hearings

(continued from page 1)

which included industry representatives, public interest groups, municipal representatives and NFLCP members. Only a minority of the Congressional sub-committee members showed up for the meetings and they were disrupted from time to time to go to the house floor to vote.

Karen Possner, of the house committee staff, did an excellent job directing the discussion of the diverse groups, allowing a great deal of time for discussion of access in view of the multitude of cable issues, Hoke said.

Regulation of Cable

Debate over which regulatory bodies should have jurisdiction over cable was as spirited as that on the regulations themselves. The cable industry supported the idea of exclusive federal control of cable, industry leaders claiming that a two- or three-tiered approach, including state and local regulations, was burdensome and regulations were often contradictory. The CTIC, a Washington, D.C. organization that provides technical assistance to municipalities, responded by saying that local governments should be able to negotiate with operators through franchise agreements. No representatives of the cable commissioners participated in any of the panels.

The NFLCP advocated the three-tier approach to regulation:

—**Federal minimum standards** are needed to ensure consistent development of cable services.

—**State authorities** can be helpful in assisting local municipalities by providing comprehensive support.

—**Local control** is needed, because local citizens can best make decisions which affect cable in their own community.

Putting the three-tier concept in the context of access illustrates its value, according to the NFLCP's Hoke. The federal government requires that community access to cable be provided for in each cable community. Through the franchise, the community and the operator determine the "how to go about it" questions and the "financial support" questions. Hoke contends that communities that are not prepared to deal with these and other cable is-

suues can be aided by impartial cable commission intervention. For example, the Minnesota Cable Commission has been instrumental in insuring that access standards were written into a number of cable franchises in that state.

Federal Access Standards

The NFLCP is calling for the following minimum standards:

- Community access be made available on a first come-first served non-discriminatory basis.

- At least one dedicated access channel be made available for public, educational and municipal access as well as local origination, and additional time should be provided upon demand.

- Free non-commercial community access to channels and playback.

- Local origination be encouraged but not required.

- Provisions for commercial leased access be made on each cable system.

- Minimum equipment packages be available to local producers to facilitate local production, including remote, multicamera studio, editing, and live production capability.

- Personnel be provided in each cable community to nurture and administer access through community education, training, and management of facilities.

- Two percent of the gross revenues of each cable system be earmarked for defraying the costs of equipment packages and other facilities necessary to foster community use of access.

- Access users should have full control over the content of their programs.

The NCTA in a paper prepared for the hearing, stated their position on access as follows:

"Any revision of the Communications Act of 1934 must preempt non-federal action regarding the requirement of public access on cable systems and allow the commission to encourage the use of cable as a medium capable of providing local community programming in the public interest.

"It must also require certain-sized cable systems to provide one equivalent channel for public access users while preventing technical degradation of the system and the existing services.

"Channel time or facilities to be provided at no cost or a 'cost on demand,' should also be required if such is in the public interest."

The NCTA seems to realize that use of the access channels is catching on, and that public access can help substantiate its positions on the issues. In its position paper on public access, the NCTA stated, "The cable capability and willingness to be non-ancillary to broadcast television can be documented in its commitment to provide low-cost or no-cost time and facilities for non-commercial public or rented use."

Acceptance of public access also gives the NCTA ground to stand on to fight leased access, which many operators feel is an immediate financial threat.

The paper further states, "...it is this programming (public access) and not programming on the commercial leased channel, which provides the truly local function of cable television."

The FCC

One problem, according to NFLCP spokesman Hoke, is that regulations are confusing and operators and access users are often at odds over interpretations. He went on to point out that the commission's "reluctant referee" enforcement policy supported non-cooperative operators. He charged that the guidelines on access that each operator is required to submit to the FCC have never been reviewed by FCC staff for compliance. This has led operators who are not meeting requirements to believe their local rules are adequate, since these rules were seemingly accepted, according to Hoke. Placing the burden of complaint on access users forces that user into an adversary relationship with the operator he/she is seeking cooperation from. Access users are typically unfamiliar with complaint procedures or are reluctant to use them, he said.

James Hobson, the FCC cable bureau chief, responded by arguing that the FCC will respond to informal complaints, and if necessary, the user can make a formal complaint.

Karen Possner is currently working on a preliminary staff report outlining similarities and differences of testimonies that were given. Work will begin within a few months on the first draft of legislation. ■

Info Matchup

Bulletin

Have a new address? If you have moved or are moving, let us know. NFLCP members should let their Regional Coordinators know their new address and phone. *Newsletter* subscribers should contact the national office with that information: 763½ Chestnut St., Dubuque, IA 52001.

The Women's Institute for Freedom of the Press (WIFP) has announced the publication of its first book, *Women in Media: A Documentary Source Book* by Dr. Maurine Beasley and Sheila Silver. The book documents the movement to bring changes in media for women from 1790 to the present day.

WIFP also publishes an annual Index Directory, which lists some 500 women's media groups, periodicals, and media women in the U.S. and other countries. The publication also indexes background material for research on women and media which has appeared in *Media Report to Women*, a periodical founded by WIFP in 1972.

The purpose of WIFP, a nonprofit tax-exempt organization, is to engage in research on all aspects of communication; to study ways in which freedom of the press may be extended to more people, worldwide; and to inform those women who have a special interest in media of new developments in the field.

In its early years, 1972-73, the WIFP conducted a women's communication education project on cable television that was planned as a model program for women's groups working at the community level.

For more information, contact: Dr. Donna Allen, Director, Women's Institute for Freedom of the Press, 3306 Ross Place, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20008, (202) 966-7783.

Funding

The Film Fund is a tax-exempt public foundation that supports the production and distribution of visual media projects on social issues and social change. It makes direct grants to outstanding projects meeting its guidelines and is developing plans for consultant and referral services. The next grant deadline is tentatively scheduled for September, 1978. More info: The Film Fund, 80 East 11th St., Suite 647, New York, NY 10003, (212) 475-3720. On the west coast, call (213) 821-5001.

Publications

How to Publish Community Information on an Impossibly Tight Budget is a great little booklet about printing which can be very helpful to those with little money to spend. It contains information about offset, stencils, hot type, layout and more. Available from the Do It Now Foundation, P.O. Box 5115, Phoenix, AZ 85010. Individual copies are 50¢ each, 10 for \$3.50.

Media Action Handbook, published by The National Committee Against Discrimination in Housing (NCDH), is a useful handbook on access to the media. The manual outlines step-by-step suggestions for planning, initiating, and carrying forward an overall information program involving television, radio and the press. Contact NCDH, 1425 H Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20005, (202) 783-8150, for information on ordering the handbook.

The National Commission on the Observance of International Women's Year, in its final report to the President in 1976, found "a predominance of discrimination against women throughout the media industry. Further study revealed bias ranging from underrepresentation in policymaking and news positions to ridicule of women's activities in daily coverage." The committee also proposed 10 guidelines on the treatment of women in the media. The full report, . . . **To Form a More Perfect Union. . . Justice for American Women**, and a pamphlet, **Media Guidelines**, are available by writing the Office of Public Information, IWY Commission, Room 1004, Department of State Building, Washington, D.C. 20520.

Community Education

(continued from page 10)

known about the race for mayor. I have become more interested in the office of Mayor and of everything that is concerned with it."

Kay Johnson, a junior, said, "In the beginning Carlos and I testified at a hearing for cable television. I had never done anything like this before; in fact, I never knew that people could testify. Our statements seemed to have a great impact on the committee."

As the students became confident of their technical, communication, and organizational skills, they offered to share them. "Friends of mine have asked me to help them do shows in the

Video and Cable Communications, Guidelines for Librarians A new publication of the Information Science and Automation Division of the American Library Association written by Brigitte L. Kenney and Roberto Esteves.

The publication is intended for those who are interested in gaining an overall look at the use of video in libraries or for those who would like to understand the technology, or who need to know how to establish and administer a video unit, or are seeking information about the legal and regulatory aspects of the field. It can also be used as a study-guide for staff development.

Some of the chapters include video for library services, video for patron use, programming for special groups, financing, hardware, sources for programming, software, regulations and franchising, and community organization and resources. The book includes check lists of things to do, sources for information, and an extensive annotated bibliography.

Copies are available (prepaid only) at \$3.50 each from the Information Science and Automation Division of the American Library Association, 50 E. Huron St., Chicago, IL 60611. Please make checks payable to the American Library Association.

Jobs

Coordinator of community programming Danbury, Conn. Must be experienced in half-inch Portapak and editing. Salary \$9,200 plus benefits. Send resume to: Paul Morton, Video Dept., Danbury Public Library, Danbury, CT 06810.

future. With the skills I have learned, I will be able to help them and others," stated Chris Reinhart. "The workshop gave me some skills which I can and will put to use either teaching others or using them myself," wrote Stewart Miller. The students went on to produce programs for the library, social service agencies, nonprofit groups, their schools and themselves.

The success of each Video Workshop in obtaining its objectives has fluctuated and depends on the experience and skill of the instructor. This underscores the need for instructors to define workshop goals, learn the needs and concerns of the participants, and employ interesting teaching methods. ■

Ed. note—The next issue of the Newsletter will contain a detailed description of different techniques used in training workshops.

February 22 Deadline for reply comments to the Federal Communications Commission on the matter of "saturated cable systems," or those 12-channel systems which carry (or are required to carry) more than 12 television signals.

Among other things, the commission wants comments on the relative priority of access services and cablecast programming compared to mandatory and distant signals.

Comments due January 23, 1978; replies, February 22. For a copy of the FCC's 13-page release on the subject, write Public Information Officer, FCC, 1919 M. St., N.W., Washington, D.C. 20554. Refer to Docket No. 21472, Mimeo No. 83417, FCC 77-771. (You can file a reply comment to the FCC without filing or reading any initial comments.)

February 23-25 Cable: A Community Resource Conference sponsored by the Minnesota Cable Communications Board at Anoka-Ramsey Community College in Coon Rapids, Minnesota. The conference will attract cable operators, municipal officials, local programmers, audio-visual di-

rectors from educational institutions, cable citizen advisory bodies, and others. Topics for various sessions include: new services that may be delivered via cable, alternatives for delivering cable services to rural areas, interconnection methods available to statewide and regional users, building and measuring audiences for cable programming, municipal/state/federal roles in cable communications development. Contact Anita Benda, Cable Communications Board, 500 Rice St., St. Paul, MN 55103, (612) 296-2545.

March 10 Eighth Annual Film Festival on the Exceptional Individual The University of Southern California, University Affiliated Program at Childrens Hospital of Los Angeles and the Southern California Region II of the American Association on Mental Deficiency are sponsoring this festival, which will include outstanding professional, independent and commercial films and video tapes portraying handicapped children and adults that were produced during the past year. The films selected may be those that were prepared with a special pro-

Calendar

essional group in mind (i.e., physicians or educators) or may be of general interest. Approximately 500 persons are expected to attend and special awards are given to the most outstanding films selected by a panel of representatives from the film industry, parents and professionals. Contact: Mr. Neil Goldstin, Assistant Director of Training in Instructional Technology, University Affiliated Program, Childrens Hospital of Los Angeles, Box 54700 Terminal Annex, Los Angeles, CA 90054.

April 9-12 National Association of Broadcasters annual convention. Las Vegas.

April 30-May 2 Action for Children's Television seventh annual symposium on children's TV. Washington.

April 30-May 3 Annual convention of the **National Cable Television Association**. New Orleans.

REGIONAL REPORTS

(continued from page 9)

Other presentators included Cathy Hanson, Madison Community Access Corp., Sue Smoller, cable TV officer for the City of Madison (municipal access), Jim Malec, Community Video Center, Minneapolis, Minnesota, Sue Buske, Dubuque Community Access TV, Justin Galler, Bright City, Iowa, and Nora De John, Davenport, Iowa.

During the business meeting, Jim Malec, Minneapolis, was appointed Regional Advocacy Chairperson, Carol Brown Eilber became Regional Community Education Chairperson, and Justin Galler, Iowa City and Chicago, was approved as Regional Representative to the NFLCP Steering Committee.

Far West Region

Regional Coordinator:
Paul Denn
CVC
6225 Federal Blvd.
San Diego, CA 92102
(714) 263-2424

Southeastern Region

Regional Coordinators:
John Schnur and Ron Kemp
Video Tape Workshop
2316 D. H. Hill
North Carolina State University
Raleigh, NC 27607
(919) 737-3303

Southwest Region

Regional Coordinator:
Joel Goldblatt
1508 Windsor Rd.
Austin, TX 78703
(512) 477-3887

We hope to hear from other regions and states about activities in their areas soon and suggest that at *any* meeting the Chair appoint a reporter to summarize the meeting and send it directly to the *Newsletter* editors for the upcoming issue. Without this direct report from you to us, we will not be able to include the information in the *Newsletter*. Response to and suggestions for this column will always be welcome. Send remarks either to the editors or to Sue Buske, Regional Development Coordinator, 763½ Chestnut St., Dubuque, IA 52001. ■

Video and Film Festival

(continued from page 3)

be shown at the national conference and will also be presented on a national tour of cable television channels across the country. Copies of the selected entries will become part of the NFLCP tape library exchange and will be cata-

logued for distribution. (Details concerning distribution will be discussed with the individual producers.)

Entries must be postmarked no later than June 9, 1978. All entries must be accompanied by a completed official entry form. Format: ½-inch and ¾-inch tape and super 8 film (silent or mag. striped). All work must be clean and in good condition. The festival staff will take extreme care with all

works but will assume no responsibility for technical difficulties or accidental damage.

An entry fee of \$5.00 per tape or film to cover the cost of postage and handling is required. For applications write to NFLCP Video/Super 8 Film Festival, c/o Larry Staab, festival coordinator, 456 S. Atlantic Avenue, Pittsburgh, PA 15224. Telephone: (412) 683-7590. ■

NFLCP
c/o Sue Buske
763 1/2 Chestnut St.
Dubuque, IA 52001

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